(a) whether it is a fact that this year's budget allocation for public health care sector is only 1.37% (Rs. 3600 crore) of the total outlay, whereas it was 1.8% (Rs. 2,687 crores) last year;

(b) if so, why this reduction in allocation has been effected; and

(c) how Government propose to meet the challenges posed by higher incidence of disease in rural areas, especialy combating deadly diseases like AIDS, etc.?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) and (b) The State Sector outlays for 1998-99 are yet to be finalisd by the Planning Commission. Therefore, it will not be possible to compare percentage of health sector outlay to total outlay of 1998-99 with that of 1997-98. However, during 1997-98 percentage of outlays for Health, Family Welfare and ISM & H was 2.72% of the total outlay for alll sectors.

(c) To meet the health care needs of the people, a comprehensive network of rural health infrastructure comprising 1,36,339 Subcentres, 22,010 Primary Health Centres and 2,622 Community Health Centres has been established throughout the country. External assistance has been mobilised by the Central Government for supporting National Programmes for control of diseases such as AIDS, Malaria, T.B., Leprosy, and Blindness. To arrest the spread of HIV/AIDS infection, clinical services and cases management activities are being strengthened including creating general awareness among the masses about the disease.

Secondary health facilities are also being upgraded in selected States with World Baank assistance.

Development of Indian Systems of Medicine and Homoeopathy is being encouraged to widen the network of health services available to the people. A comprehensive project for reproductive and child health caters to the special requirements of women and children.

Disposable Surgical items Manufactured by Foreign Companies

2034. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether various foreign companies manufacturing syringes and other single use surgical items are flooding the Indian market;

(b) whether it has come to the notice of Government that the packages of most of such items do not carry the statutory labelling information;

(c) whether the consumers are being charged for these items according to the whims of the chemists and stockists; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) Under the import policy disposable syringes and needles can be imported into the country. However, the majority of such items sold in India are assembled within the Country. There are very few importers of finished disposable syringes and needles.

(b) The requirement of labelling are see out under the Drugs and Cosmetic Rules and have to be adhered to. Other than the absence of Maximum Retail Price (MRP) and import licence number in a few imported consignments, no other labelling violation has been brought to the notice of the authorities. The importers as well as Port Officers have been directed to ensure that the MRP and import license number are displayed on the outer packaging cartons.

(c) Disposable syringes and needles are not covered under the Drugs Price Control Order (DPCO); nor has the Drug Controlller General (India) received any official complaints from Consumers in this regard.

(d) In view of (c) does not arise.

Scheme for access to Health Care for all

2035. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a delegation consisting of Heads of Indian Medical Association (IMA), the network of practicing doctors met him last month to propose a three-pronged scheme to ensure affordable access to health care for all citizens without the State having to spend more money;

(b) if so, the details of the proposals; and

(c) the action Government propose to take thereon?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. A proposal has been received from the Indian Medical Association recommending various measures like raising the expenditure on health care, opening up of the health insurance sector, declaring the health care as an infrastructure sector, extending Customs Duty exemption for import of specialized medical equipment etc. The proposals are under examination.

Annual requirement of Blood Units in the Country

2036. SHRI E. BALANANDAN:
SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the annual requirement of blood units in the country and the contribution of blood by the professional donors;

(b) in view of the Supreme Court order banning professional donors' contributing blood, what steps Government propose to meet the fall in the supply; and

(c) the number of medical colleges without blood banks in the country, State and Union tarritory-wise?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) As per norms recommended by W.H.O. the annual requirement of blood should be to the tune of 42 lakh units. Government has imposed a ban on collection of blood from professional donors with effect from 1.1.1998.

(b) To meet the fall in supply of blood, Government of India have taken a number of steps for augmenting voluntary blood donation by:-

- launching a television and radio campaign to motivate peope to donate blood.
- preparation and dissemination of publicity material aimed at promoting blood donation.
- initiating a pilot programme to give an impetus to blood donation through the National Council for Science and Technology Communication.
- undertaking training of motivators.
- celebration of the volunatary blood donation day on 1st October every year.

(c) Indian Medical Council Act 1956 makes it mandatory to establish a blood bank in every Medical College having an admission capacity of 100 and more. Informations relating to Colleges with however capacity will be collected and laid on the table of the House.

Strike in Safdarjung Hospital

2037. DR. ALLADI P. RAJKUMAR: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be peased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that health care services at the Safdarjung Hospital were paralysed recently as the resident doctors and Karamcharis stayed away from work;

(b) if so, the detailed reasons and the events leading upto the paralysing of the services at the Hospital; and

(c) the steps initiated to ward off such situations in this hospital and other leading Government hospitals when common citizens become vulnerable every now and then?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI SURESH PRABHU): (a) and (b) The health care services at Safdarjung Hospital were partially paralysed as resident doctors and Karmacharis stayed away from work on a controversy regarding use of Resident Doctors Hostel Mess facilities by the Karmacharis.

(c) Hospital authorities have taken action to establish a separate canteen for Karamcharis in the Hospital. The Medical Superintendents of the Central Government Hospitals are re-